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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	USNW-00	DODE-00	DOTE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01
	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	BBG-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-02	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7793
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RWANDA COLLECTIVE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 006907

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

LONDON FOR GURNEY

PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/10

TAGS: PGOV PREL MOPS CG ZI

SUBJECT: SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON
SIGNING OF DISENGAGEMENT AND REDEPLOYMENT OF FORCES
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AGREEMENT

REF: LUSAKA 5410

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR TOM MCDONALD FOR REASONS 1.5
B/D.

11. (C) ON DECEMBER 7 DCM HAD BREAKFAST WITH A VERY TIRED DAVID HAMADZIRIPI, A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CURRENTLY POSTED IN KINSHASA. THE ZIMBABWEAN DIPLOMAT, WHO ATTENDED THE DRC DISENGAGEMENT MEETING IN HARARE, REPORTED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT EXPECTED THE SIGNING CEREMONY TO BE NON-CONTROVERSIAL, BUT NEGOTIATIONS THAT BEGAN ON DECEMBER 5 STRETCHED INTO THE EARLY HOURS OF THE NEXT MORNING. HE CONTINUED THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE CONGOLESE REBEL MOVEMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE CONGO (MLC), OBJECTED TO THE JOINT POLITICAL COMMITTEE'S ADOPTION OF THE SUB-PLANS FOR THE DISENGAGEMENT AND REDEPLOYMENT OF FORCES IN THE FOUR MILITARY SECTORS OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) (REFTEL). THE MLC, WHICH WAS REPRESENTED AT THE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL MEETING BY ITS RELATIVELY JUNIOR MEMBER ON THE JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION, REFUSED TO SIGN CLAIMING HIS MOVEMENT WOULD ONLY DO SO WHEN THE INTERNAL DIALOGUE IN THE DRC HAD BEGUN. HAMADZIRIPI THOUGHT THAT IT WAS A PLAY FOR TIME, AS JEAN-PIERRE BEMBA PROBABLY HAD NOT GIVEN HIS DELEGATE A MANDATE TO JOIN THE CONSENSUS.

12. (C) HAMADZIRIPI MADE A STRONG PLEA FOR A SIX-MONTH
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EXTENSION OF THE MONUC MANDATE AND AN EARLY DEPLOYMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS' PEACEKEEPING BATTALION. "WITHOUT IT THESE AGREEMENTS ARE A DEAD LETTER," HE SUMMED UP. HE HOPED THE USG WOULD SUPPORT THE HARARE EFFORT AT THE WORLD BODY. THE SIGNING OF THE DISENGAGEMENT PLAN SHOULD BE SEEN AS A SIGN THAT THE DRC PLAYERS ARE SERIOUS ABOUT A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION, HE DECLARED. HE ADDED THAT ZIMBABWE HAD BROUGHT HOME TWO BATTALIONS FROM THE CONGO, WHICH IT DID NOT INTEND TO REPLACE. THE FIGHTING NEAR PWETO SHOULD NOT DETER MONUC DEPLOYMENT BECAUSE MONUC COULD EASILY DEPLOY TO ANY OTHER AREA OF THE FRONT, WHICH IS MOSTLY QUIET. WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE REPORTED TAKING OF PWETO BY REBEL FORCES POSED A THREAT TO THE AGREEMENT, HAMADZIRIPI STATED CATEGORICALLY, "NO."

13. (C) COMMENT: HAMADZIRIPI, A RELIABLE CONTACT ON DRC MATTERS, WAS UNUSUALLY KEEN ON RECEIVING US SUPPORT FOR THIS LATEST DIPLOMATIC EFFORT TO DISENTANGLE THE WARRING PARTIES IN THE DRC. PRESIDENT MUGABE, WHO ADDRESSED

LOCAL DEFENSE ATTACHES ATTENDING THE SIGNING CEREMONY, URGED THEIR GOVERNMENTS TO GET BEHIND THE DISENGAGEMENT PLAN. THIS EXTRAORDINARY DIPLOMATIC PLEADING COULD BE AN INDICATION THAT THE DRC ALLIES ARE INCREASINGLY DESPERATE TO STOP THE FIGHTING BEFORE REBELS MAKE ANY MORE ADVANCES. ALTHOUGH ZIMBABWE MAY HAVE INTENDED TO CONTINUE A GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL, RECENT ADVANCES BY THE REBELS MAY FORCE THE ZIMBABWE DEFENSE FORCES TO REDEPLOY FORCES TO THE CONGO. THE ALLIES COULD FEAR THAT THEY ARE LOSING MOMENTUM TO THE REBELS, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF REPORTS OF A HASTY RETREAT BY DRC ALLIES FROM PWETO.

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WITH HIS DOMESTIC CHALLENGES MOUNTING, MUGABE, IN PARTICULAR, CANNOT AFFORD AN INTENSIFIED WAR IN THE DRC OR A MAJOR MILITARY REVERSAL. END COMMENT.

MCDONALD

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